THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) The Government fixes Minimum Support Prices (MSP) of two basic varieties of cotton *viz.* F-414/H-777/J-34 and H-4 on the basis of recommendations made by the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP). The CACP, *inter alia,* considers the cost of production of crops including expenditures on fixed and variable inputs, the trend of domestic and international prices, input output price parity, demand-supply scenario, imports and exports, expert opinion of Government and non-Governmental organizations are also taken into consideration. The MSP of other varieties of cotton is fixed by the Ministry of Textiles taking into account the quality differential, normal price differential and other relevant factors.

(c) At present, the CACP has four Members besides the Chairman. Of the four, two are non-official members who possess long agricultural experience with active association with the farming community.

(d) and (e) With a view to take the farmers' interest into consideration, CACP holds interactive meetings with the Farmers' Organization, State Agricultural Universities and Government Authorities. Further, the Commission undertakes field visits for assessing ground reality through interaction/consultations with farmers in different parts of the Country.

Stopping export of pulses

*93. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that experts have warned Government to stop export of pulses because in the year 2005-2006 there has been acute shortage of pulses in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government are now planning to import the pulses; and

(d) if so, the reasons for importing it when we had been exporting it earlier?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (d) The domestic production of pulses falls short of the consumption

requirements in the country. This shortfall is met through imports. As is evident from the data below, the net domestic availability of pulses in the country during the year 2005-2006 was marginally higher as compared to the previous year:—

Availability of Pulses (Lakh Tonnes)

	Year 2004-05	Year 2005-06
Domestic production	131.3	131.1*
Imports	13.39	16.08
Exports	(2.71)	(4.44)
Net domestic availability	141.98	142.74

*IVth advance Estimates.

Also, the prices of major pulses included in the basket of essential commodities (toor and gram) did not indicate any alarming trend during the year 2005-06.

The prices of pulses started increasing sharply after March, 2006. To arrest this increase in prices, the Government took a number of initiatives including restrictions on export of pulses, removal of customs duties on import of pulses and directions to NAFED to import 45,000 tonnes of pulses on Government account.

There were no restrictions on the import and export of pulses in the country prior to the current export restrictions imposed on 27th June, 2006. Exports are normally permitted to encourage value addition in the country. The average per unit price realization from export of pulses is higher than the average per unit import price, making exports profitable. Exports also provide an revnue to increase the price realization for farmers engaged in pulses cultivation.

Wheat quota for Kerala

*94. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the wheat quota for Kerala for distribution to APL and BPL card holders has been sharply cut from June onwards;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;